

Central City 2035 Draft Plan Comments from Mary Vogel Aug. 10, 2016



SW Columbia looking east from SW 13th. There are no street trees on Columbia for most blocks until SW 10th. Most of the trees visible in the photo are on side streets. Lane width is extremely generous.

I really like many concepts in the plan that I've worked on over the last 4 years--including:

- One of it's "Big Ideas": Design Streets to Be Great Places
- Oregon's first designation as a Multimodal Mixed-Use Area (MMA)

As an adult cyclist for over 40 years and also a resident of the West End for over 7 years, I want to address—for the West End—how to strengthen these great concepts in the plan.

Build only bikeways that also improve the streetscape for pedestrians too

Measure 20131 in the TSP: Jefferson Columbia Bikeway needs to be expanded to make Jefferson and Columbia safe and pleasant for pedestrians—with wider sidewalks, large canopy street trees and narrower traffic lanes. Wider sidewalks will allow canopy-size street trees to thrive and those large canopy street trees will also make Columbia and Jefferson safer and more pleasant for cyclists too.



SW Jefferson, part of the "bikeway" couplet, looking east from SW 13th and the I-405 Freeway. Widening the sidewalks to accommodate large canopy street trees would make the street into a "Great Place" safer for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists too.

Additional Policies and Implementation Actions Needed

I have suggestions for revisions to the policies in **Vol.1_02 Goals and Policies** and the *Action Table for Lead Implementers* in **Vol. 5 Implementation**.

Vol.1_02 Goals and Policies

These policies could go in under [Transportation](#), [Urban Design](#) or [Health and Environment](#)—so the numbering may need to change, depending upon where you decide to put them.

Policy 1.WE- _ SW Jefferson-SW Columbia Develop and implement a strategy to make SW Jefferson and SW Columbia into multi-modal boulevards with wider sidewalks, large canopy street trees and narrower traffic lanes.

Policy 3.WE-3 Columbia/Jefferson Cap. Develop and implement a strategy to cap I-405 from Columbia to Jefferson to make the pollution hot spot now found at the freeway juncture (I-405 & Hwy 26) more tolerable to residents [who are largely low-income and have little other choice]--and also expand area for further building in the central city.

Policy 3.WE 4 Salmon Green Street. Support development of the SW Salmon Green Street as a key east-west green connection from Washington Park and Goose

Hollow to the Willamette River.

Also consider this change in wording:

Policy 5.WE-2 Street hierarchy and development character. Support the retail/commercial character of SW 10th Avenue, Jefferson and Yamhill streets and develop a [the] boulevard character on [of] Morrison, Columbia, Clay and Market streets and 12th Avenue.

With the possible exception of Morrison, these streets do NOT feel at all like boulevards now; they feel like raceways. If the language is meant to be aspirational, that should be pointed out.

Policy 6.WE-2 Water management and reuse. Take advantage of the West End's topography, identify opportunities for stormwater management, as well as rainwater harvesting and reuse within the district.

Because I-405 acts as a valley between Goose Hollow and the West End, the West End is the "headwaters" for stormwater flowing off its streets and buildings through Downtown to the Willamette River.

Policy 7.WE- Address climate adaptation and reduce the impacts to neighbors from I-405 noise and air pollution by working with ODOT to **replant I-405 with dense NATIVE trees and shrubs** and **improve/replant its vine coverage of canyon walls**. ODOT, BES, PBOT

Policy 8.WE- Institute a land tax on the development potential of **surface parking lots**. Incentivize "Parking Forests" ([org](#)) that **achieve stormwater management and reduce the urban heat island effect** while awaiting redevelopment by reducing such tax if street trees and the Parking Forest or other biological control of stormwater are installed. BES, Private

Policy 9.WE- Explore opportunities for one or more **community gardens in the WE or DT**. Consider such opportunities at all publicly-owned spaces including the roofs and wall of structured parking lots. PPR

Policy 10.WE- Require that all new and redeveloped buildings **provide opportunity for food gardening**. BPS, Private

Policy 11.WE- Require that all new and redeveloped buildings **capture and reuse water**. BPS, BES, Private

Policy 12.WE- Require that **all invasive plant species be removed** from West End properties, both public and private. PPR, private

Vol. 5 Implementation

Action items need to be developed for all of the above policies—or vice versa—as most are really action items. And I hope you will do that. I've been far more generous with pro bono work than I can afford to be.

West End UD77 Improve Salmon Street as a unique east-west connection linking Washington Park to the Willamette River with active transportation, landscaping and green infrastructure facilities. Encourage additional, activating retail.

West End UD 79 Reduce the impacts to neighbors from I-405 noise and air pollution by installing green walls on new/redeveloped buildings and street trees **wherever possible**—with a special focus along SW 13th and SW 12th Aves as well as SW Jefferson and SW Columbia.
[\[Instead of where appropriate.\]](#)

West End UD83 Develop and implement a strategy to encourage main-street friendly streetscape and green infrastructure improvements on SW Jefferson Street. Green infrastructure includes planting additional trees—especially between SW 13th & 12th Avenues to buffer residents from air and noise pollution.

West End UD84 Develop and implement a strategy to create truly multi-modal streets on SW Columbia and SW Jefferson with widened sidewalks and large canopy street trees and a bikeway, while maintaining parking lanes on both sides of the street.

West End UD 85 Develop and implement a strategy to create truly multi-modal streets on SW Market and SW Clay with widened sidewalks, maintaining large canopy street trees and parking lanes on both sides of the street.

West End UD 86 Develop and implement a strategy to cap I-405 from Columbia to Jefferson.

West End UD 87 Align the funding requests in the Transportation System Plan (TSP) to reflect the above action items and begin to pay for them.

[Downtown Portland streets need to become true multi-modal streets of the 21st Century and our buildings need to adapt to the likelihood of a vastly different future. My suggested policies above are short-term strategies for making the downtown's West End living safer, more pleasant and more adaptive to climate change. They could also make our neighborhood more sociable and more fun.](#)

[The above policies will help to make CC 2035 worthy of the scrutiny of people from around the world who look to us for answers. Let us be proud to say **WE BUILD GREEN CITIES**—and mean it!](#)

CC 2035 Comments Vogel – Addendum 8-10-16

New Chapter 33.475 River Overlay Zones

There is a great deal of detail in this overlay zone that I heartily applaud—far more than I have time to mention here. I do want to say that someone put in a great deal of thought, research and attention to science throughout this chapter.

However, I don't see why all three landscape subareas shown on p. 26 should get different treatment in regard to "All plants must be native" for Subarea 1 on p. 28. Riparian areas are critical wildlife corridors and our native wildlife need NATIVE PLANTS to survive. That's because insects are the base of the food chain and the larvae of most native insects are adapted only to the chemistry of the native plants that they depend upon to grow to maturity. Without insects, the whole food chain collapses. **Help continue that food chain well into the future by requiring native plants in all three subareas along western Oregon's major wildlife corridor!**

Again, I encourage you to apply "**All plants must be native**" to all three subareas. According to the Oregon Flora Project, there are 4,620 species, subspecies and varieties of native vascular plants in Oregon. While not all are appropriate to the banks of the Willamette, there are enough that are on that list. We do not need to use alien ornamentals in order to achieve pleasing and diverse designs.

Endorsing some of the fine points made by my downtown neighbor and **former** fellow committee member on the Downtown Land Use and Transportation Committee, Wendy Rahm.

- **Reconcile the West End policy for a potential/park/open space throughout the draft:** Reconcile the supporting policies and maps (expressed in Vol 1 p42 Policy 2.1; p44 Policy 2.WE-1; Vol1 p93 map; and Vol5 p231 map) with several maps not reflecting this open space need: show a *p_o_t_e_n_t_i_a_l*_West End park/open space on maps in Vol 1 p11, p40-41, p64-5 and p78-79.
- Add the word "**community center**"_(per Vol 1 p42 Policy 2.1) to **Vol1 p44 Policy 2.WE-1**. ... Endorse also the inclusion of HN35 for a West End community center in Vol5 p177 though the timeline should be changed to **2-5 years** . . .

□□□A **community center** and (nearby at least) elementary and middle **schools** are needed . .

□□□Link the *finding of an open/space/community center to the planning for the city-owned block* on SW Yamhill and 10th . . .

Future Canopy Needs

□□□A future West End park relates to **future canopy needs**. The West End canopy **goal estimates are low**, perhaps because there is no identified open space where additional trees can be planted. Yet additional trees are needed in this dense, urban district to **mitigate heat island effect and air quality** and to **soften the urban landscape**. Because no other sites are identified for additional tree canopy, a new central open space in the West End needs to be found to improve the canopy goal estimates. (Vol5 p66-69)

In my opinion, there are many other reasons why the **West End canopy goals are low and need to be increased**. I was part of the PP&R volunteer team that surveyed the neighborhood. But because the entire downtown was to be surveyed, our human resources were thin and we did not get through the survey for the West

End. In my recollection, the survey only dealt with street tree wells that currently exist—**not where they should exist.**

Some places seem to be exempted from street trees because they have other vegetation planted—e.g., the Century Tower at 1201 SW 12th Ave. has four planters with small ornamental trees that provide almost no shade to the sidewalk. One of those trees is dead and another two are in poor health. All of the trees planted on the alley between the Century Tower and John Niemeyer's other building seem to be struggling as well. None of these trees are an adequate substitute for the large canopy street trees that we need on SW 12th Ave. **Require large canopy street trees as part of the treatment of SW 12th Ave.!**

Some downtown property owners, like Steven Blindheim, owner of the Carmelita at 1232 SW Jefferson, seem to be exempted because there is no cut in the sidewalk for the street trees that should have been planted when his building was built. Cutting space for street trees in downtown sidewalks is both feasible and economical. Those owners, like Mr. Blindheim, who refused to act on the generous offer of the Bureau of Environmental Services to cut the sidewalk, plant a street tree and maintain it for three years should be publically exposed as they deserve our just anger.



These vaults along SW Columbia should be replaced by large canopy street trees—even though there are landscape trees for the parking lot to their north. Those trees do NOT replace street trees as they provide no shade to the sidewalk or the street!

Another reason the City failed to find adequate space for the needed tree canopy is that there are vaults in the sidewalk that make it difficult to find space. Adapting to climate change in the coming 20 years should pre-empt whatever convenience these vaults supplied to merchants in the past--and **many of them should be replaced**

by trees.

I agree with the testimony of Meryl Redish, Chair of the Urban Forestry Commission about the need for reforms to the Tree Code and better funding as well.

I just received the entire comments of the UFC and agree with it wholeheartedly. I fear that the lack of required setback for Sky3 will make adding large canopy street trees to SW Jefferson between SW 11th & 12 very difficult. The building being built does not appear to be the building in their images, BTW. I love the idea of a bit more setback—and for an incentive for trees on green roofs!

I agree with my nearby neighbor, Suzanne Lennard on her suggested treatment of the South Park Blocks as she says it in a more abbreviated way than Wendy Rahm:

Protection of sunlight on the South Park Blocks should be REQUIRED, rather than

“encouraged”⁶ in order to enhance the signature open space of the South Park⁷.

Maximum building heights should be LOWERED to 100’ along both sides of the park blocks; Step backs at the third story of buildings over 3 stories should be REQUIRED facing the park. The designation of “area eligible for height increase” should be REMOVED⁸.

The numbers refer to footnotes relating to policies or maps, but I won’t repeat them here.

Thanks so much for your attention and consideration!

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